

Keep Your Phone Number When You Change Companies



California Public Utilities Commission **Consumer Facts**

For years consumers with wireline phones (where the phone or its base is plugged into a phone jack) have been able to switch from one local phone company to another and keep their numbers if they remain in generally the same location. Now many California consumers with wireless phones (phones not plugged into jacks) have the same benefit. They can switch from a wireless company to another wireless company, and in most cases, can switch between a wireline company and a wireless company.

Currently consumers with service in the top 100 metropolitan areas in the nation can switch companies and keep their numbers. The service is slated to be available in the other metropolitan areas by summer of 2004. Many California counties are included in the top 100 areas, as follows:

- Alameda
- Contra Costa
- El Dorado
- Fresno
- Kern
- Los Angeles
- Madera
- Marin
- Napa
- Orange
- Placer
- Riverside
- Sacramento
- San Bernardino
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- San Joaquin
- San Mateo
- Santa Clara
- Solano
- Ventura

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If you want to change companies and keep your same number, first contact the company you want to change to. That company will start the process of switching your service over. **Remember, you are obligated to pay any early termination fees and other charges due your old company.**

Need help with a utility complaint? Call 1-800-649-7570, or use the complaint form at: www.cpuc.ca.gov.

Want someone to speak at your community group meeting? Call the CPUC Outreach Program in Los Angeles: 213-576-7058, in San Diego: 619-525-4309, in Northern California, 415-703-2074. [rev. Jan 2004]

Are there any fees or charges to change service?

The phone companies may bill you to recover their costs to change your service and this fee may vary from company to company, but check if the new company will cover any of this cost.

How long does this take?

Generally, a transfer from one wireless company to another may be completed in a few hours; transferring between wireline and wireless may take several business days. Ask your new company how long it should take and, if switching between wireline and wireless, ask if you will be able to use your number during the transfer process.

Before I change companies, what else should I consider?

- Remember to shop around to be sure you get the best features and rates for the service you want.
- If you change from a wireline company to a wireless company, your designated long distance company will not move with you. Generally the wireless company also provides the long distance service. Ask the new company about the long distance service and rates.
- In some instances your current phone may not work with the new company's technology. In that case you will have to get a new phone – check to see if the new company will cover any of the cost to purchase a new phone.
- 911 service - you will still be able to call 911 for emergencies but in some areas the enhancement that provides operators with your phone number or location is not available yet. Before you agree to change phone companies, discuss 911 service with your new company.
- When “Roaming” in some areas, customers that switch companies and keep their numbers may only be able to send and receive calls and their other features may not work.

If you have problems with switching companies, call the CPUC's Consumer Affairs staff at 800-649-7570 or file a complaint by using the online complaint form at www.cpuc.ca.gov